Drought Information Statement for Southeast Alabama, Southwest Georgia, and the Florida Panhandle & Big Bend

Valid January 8, 2026

Issued By: National Weather Service Tallahassee, FL

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- This product will be updated Thursday, January 15
- Please see all currently available products at https://drought.gov/drought-information-statements.
- Please visit https://www.weather.gov/TAE/DroughtInformationStatement for previous statements.
- Please visit https://www.drought.gov/drought-status-updates for regional drought status updates.

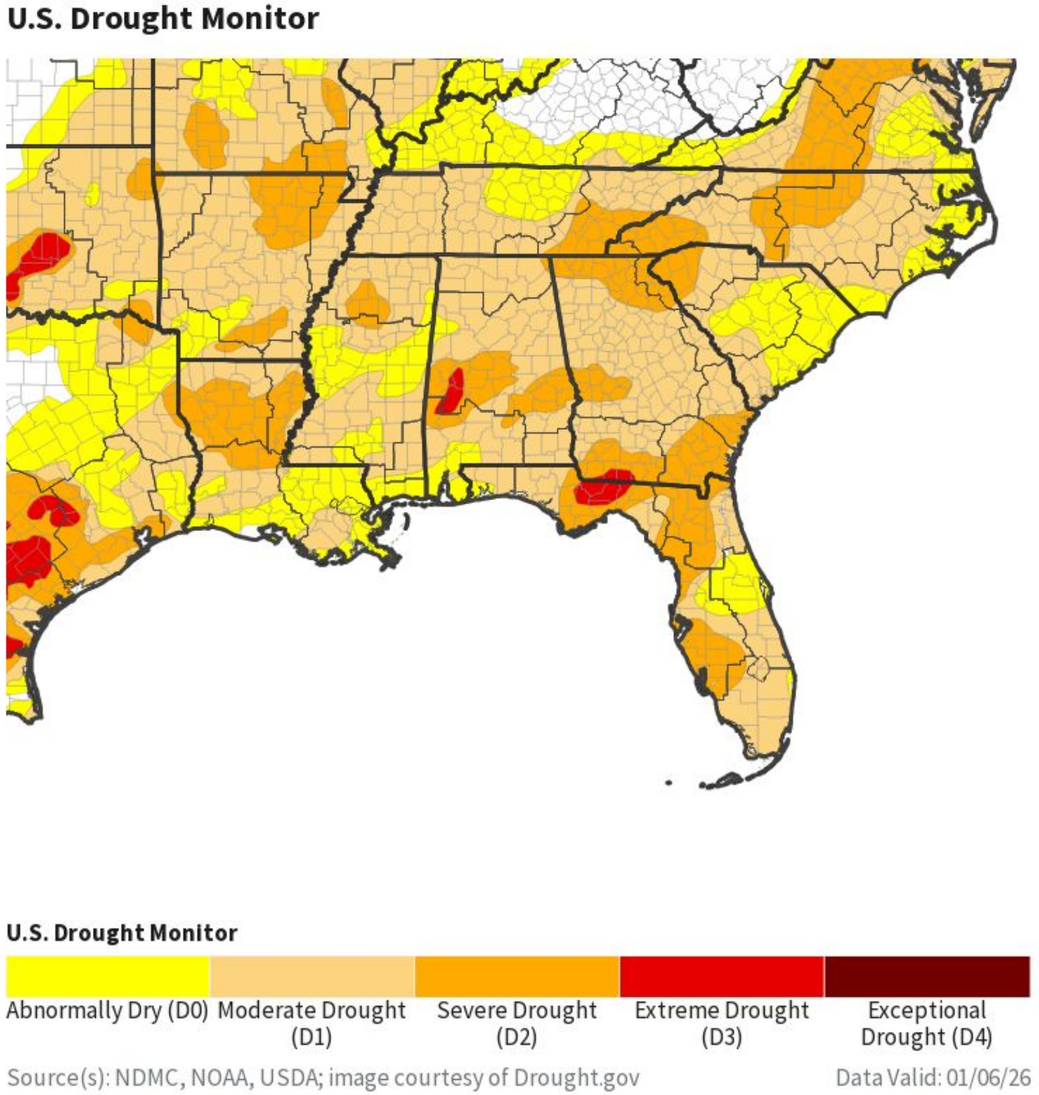
- **Despite some rainfall for the Florida Panhandle and Florida Big Bend, severe to extreme drought conditions remain.**
- Drought characteristics are becoming more long term as rivers, streams, and ponds are at incredibly low levels for this time of year.
- Some rain is possible this weekend, though drought expansion is likely next week, especially across Southwest Georgia and Southeast Alabama.

U.S. Drought Monitor

Link to the latest U.S. Drought Monitor for Southeast Alabama, Southwest Georgia, and the Florida Panhandle & Big Bend

- Welcome rainfall occurred across the Florida Panhandle and Big Bend but were not sufficient to alleviate the long term nature of this drought.
- Extended dry conditions have led to exceptionally low streamflows, lake, and pond levels for this time of year. The long duration between rainfall events, and relatively light amounts has prevented recharge of the surface water system.

- Drought intensity and Extent
  - **D3 (Extreme Drought)**: Gadsden, NE Liberty, Leon, far northern Wakulla, and Western Jefferson Counties in Florida. SE Decatur, Southern Grady, and Thomas Counties in Georgia.
  - **D2 (Severe Drought):** Far Southern Georgia and much of the Florida Big Bend except Taylor and Lafayette Counties
  - **D1 (Moderate Drought):** The remainder of the region.

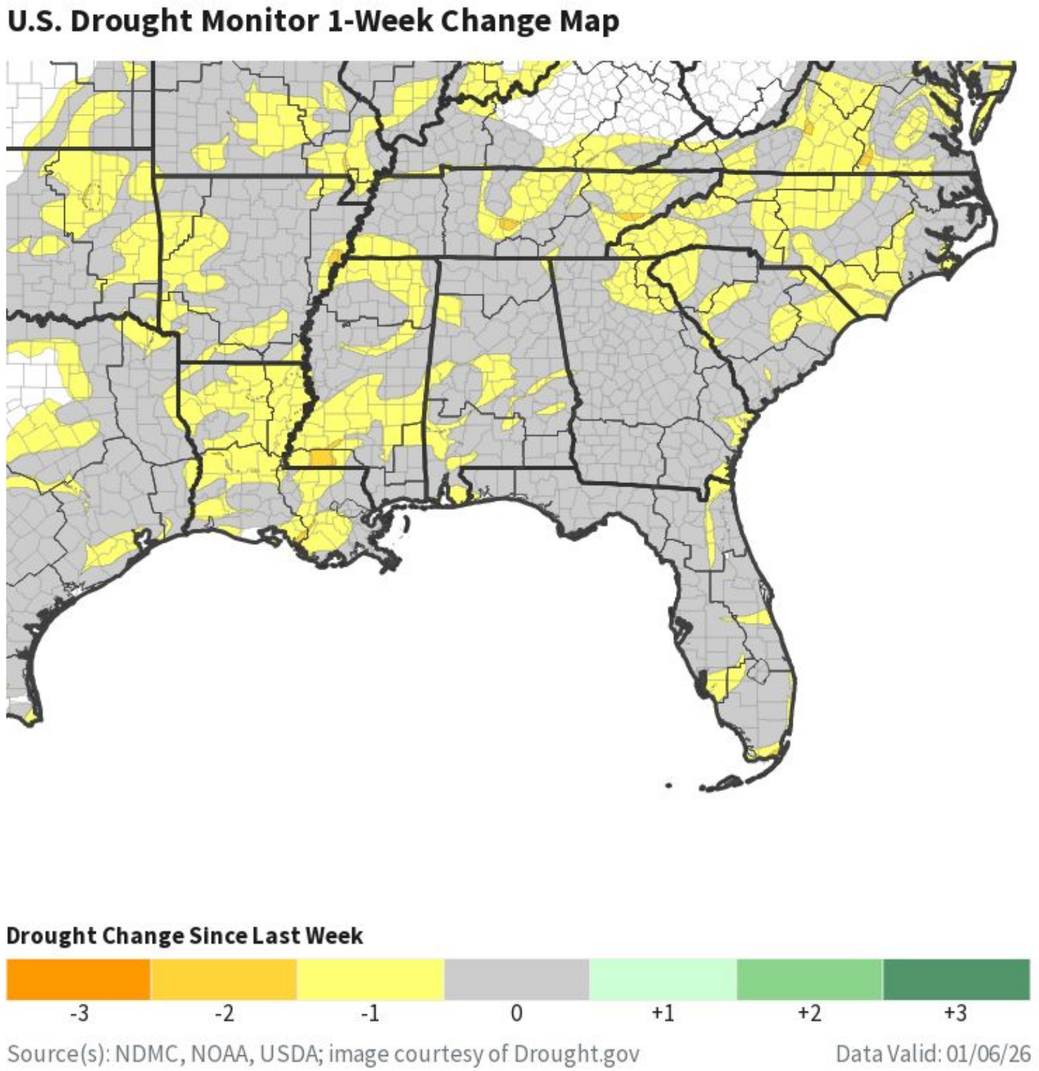


Recent Change in Drought Intensity

Link to the latest 4-week change map for Southeast Alabama, Southwest Georgia, and the Florida Panhandle & Big Bend

- No appreciable degradation across the region this week, with recent rains.

- One-Week Drought Monitor Class Change:
  - **No change:** The entire region.



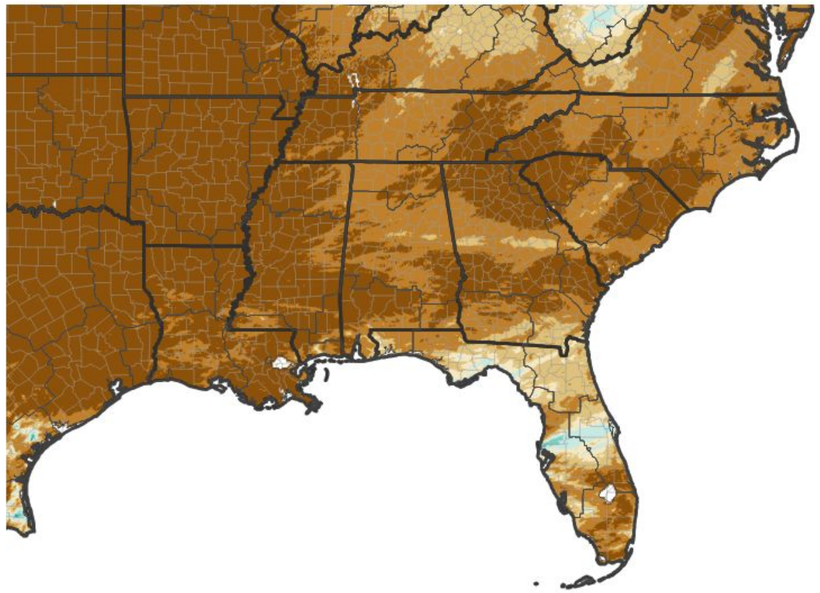
Precipitation

Note: Precipitation after 7 AM EST/6 AM CST Tuesday is incorporated in next week's Drought Monitor

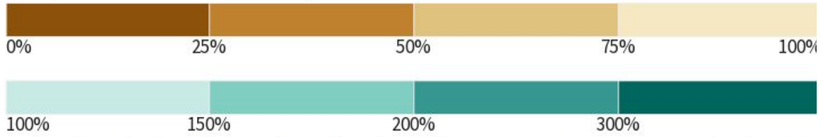
	Last 30 Days		Last 90 Days	
	Rainfall	Percent	Rainfall	Percent
DeFuniak Springs*	2.87”	57.0%	7.21”	54.7%
Panama City ECP	1.67”	38.1%	10.85”	88.4%
Dothan	0.43”	9.4%	4.96”	42.3%
Marianna	1.15”	25.8%	7.61”	65.7%
Apalachicola	0.93”	25.8%	5.92”	54.6%
Georgetown**	0.77”	15.4%	4.98”	40.3%
Dawson**	1.00”	20.4%	6.02”	51.5%
Arlington**	1.34”	28.5%	5.97”	51.9%
Albany	1.15”	27.6%	6.03”	60.8%
Cairo**	1.19”	29.0%	7.01”	66.8%
Tallahassee	2.19”	52.7%	5.81”	54.4%
Moultrie**	0.70”	18.7%	4.33”	44.9%
Monticello*	1.61“	40.5%	6.24”	60.2%
Ty Ty**	1.07”	26.4%	5.02”	49.5%
Alapaha**	0.49”	12.7%	5.15”	54.4%
Valdosta	0.77”	24.0%	4.22”	46.4%
Perry***	1.44”	42.8%	5.07”	59.1%
Mayo*	2.58”	72.9%	5.78”	67.6%

Rainfall totals through January 7, 2026. Non-NWS Data Courtesy:
*University of Florida - Florida Automated Weather Network
**University of Georgia Weather Network
***Suwannee River Water Management District
Climatology for non-NWS stations is estimated using PRISM data.

30-Day Percent of Normal Precipitation



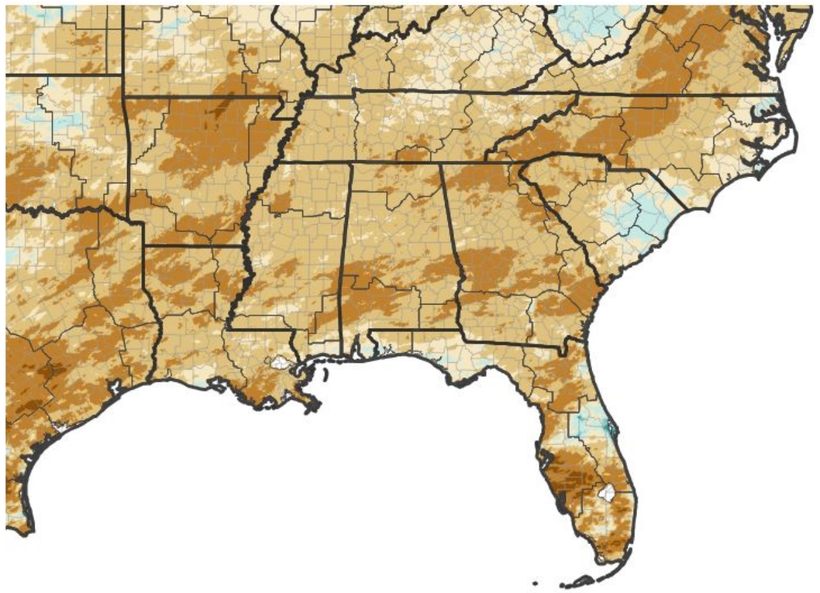
Precipitation Shown as a Percentage of Normal Conditions



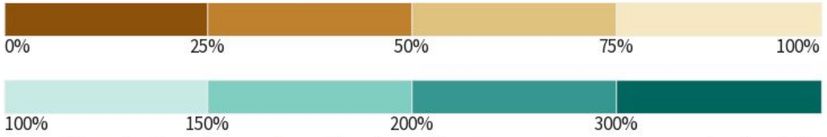
Source(s): National Weather Service Multi-Radar Multi-Sensor System; image courtesy of Drought.gov

Last Updated: 01/08/2

90-Day Percent of Normal Precipitation



Precipitation Shown as a Percentage of Normal Conditions



Source(s): National Weather Service Multi-Radar Multi-Sensor System; image courtesy of Drought.gov

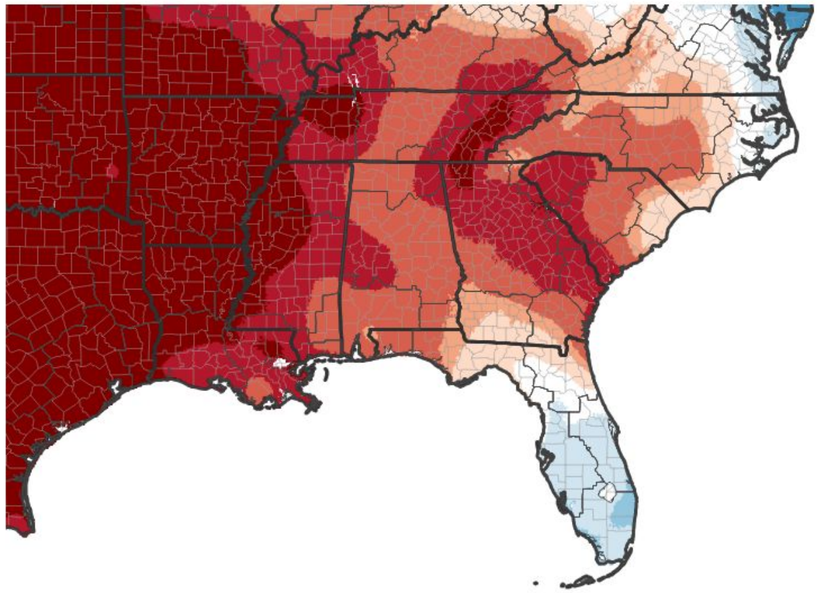
Last Updated: 01/08/26

Temperature

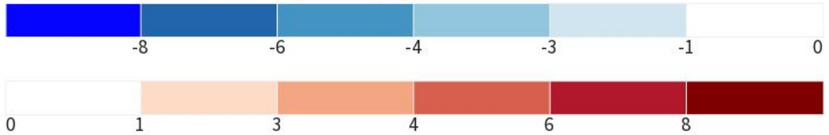
	Last 30 Days	
	Average High (Departure)	Average Low (Departure)
Tallahassee	69.2° (+4.3°)	41.1° (-0.7°)
Apalachicola	67.6° (+2.7°)	45.6° (-0.5°)
Albany	68.2° (+5.5°)	40.8° (+0.2°)
Valdosta	68.1° (+4.2°)	40.4° (+0.2°)
Marianna	68.8° (+5.2°)	42.5° (+0.4°)
Dothan	67.4° (+4.8°)	43.5° (+2.1°)

- Temperatures through the end of 2025 and into the first week of 2026 have been much above normal.
- Even so, temperatures are not appreciably high to result in significant stress to existing agricultural activities.
- Cooler conditions are on the way for next week.

7-Day Temperature Anomaly



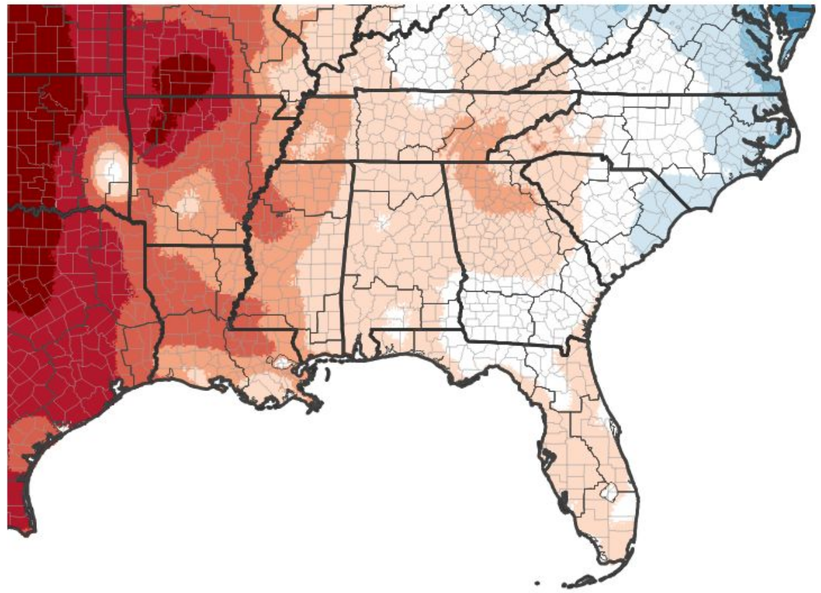
Departure from Normal Max Temperature (°F)



Source(s): NOAA's National Centers for Environmental Information; image courtesy of Drought.gov

Data Valid: 01/03/26

30-Day Temperature Anomaly



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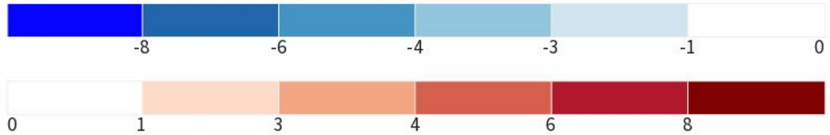


Source(s): NOAA's National Centers for Environmental Information; image courtesy of Drought.gov

Data Valid: 01/03/26

Summary of Impacts

Links: See/submit Condition Monitoring Observer Reports (CMOR) and view the Drought Impacts Reporter

Hydrologic Impacts

- Streamflows are exceptionally low for this time of year. Even with recent rainfall in the Florida Panhandle, streamflows barely responded. Most of the rainfall infiltrated into the soil, resulting minimum runoff. Surface/groundwater levels are especially low for this time of year, accentuating the long term nature of this drought.
- The lack of significant rains will only worsen streamflows as we enter the winter rainy season.

Agricultural Impacts

- Overall, cover crops are able to be planted and maintained along with hay for feeding, however, even with recent rains, these crops are stressed from the dryness, which will likely result in diminished yields through the winter.
- Winter Planting - Farmers are planting winter grazing and cover crops, but some irrigation is needed in areas.
- Supplementary feeding - Some supplemental feeding is needed, though it is not as severe as a couple of months ago.
- Holding ponds have not recovered across the region and have even worsened in some locations even with recent rains.

Fire Hazard Impacts

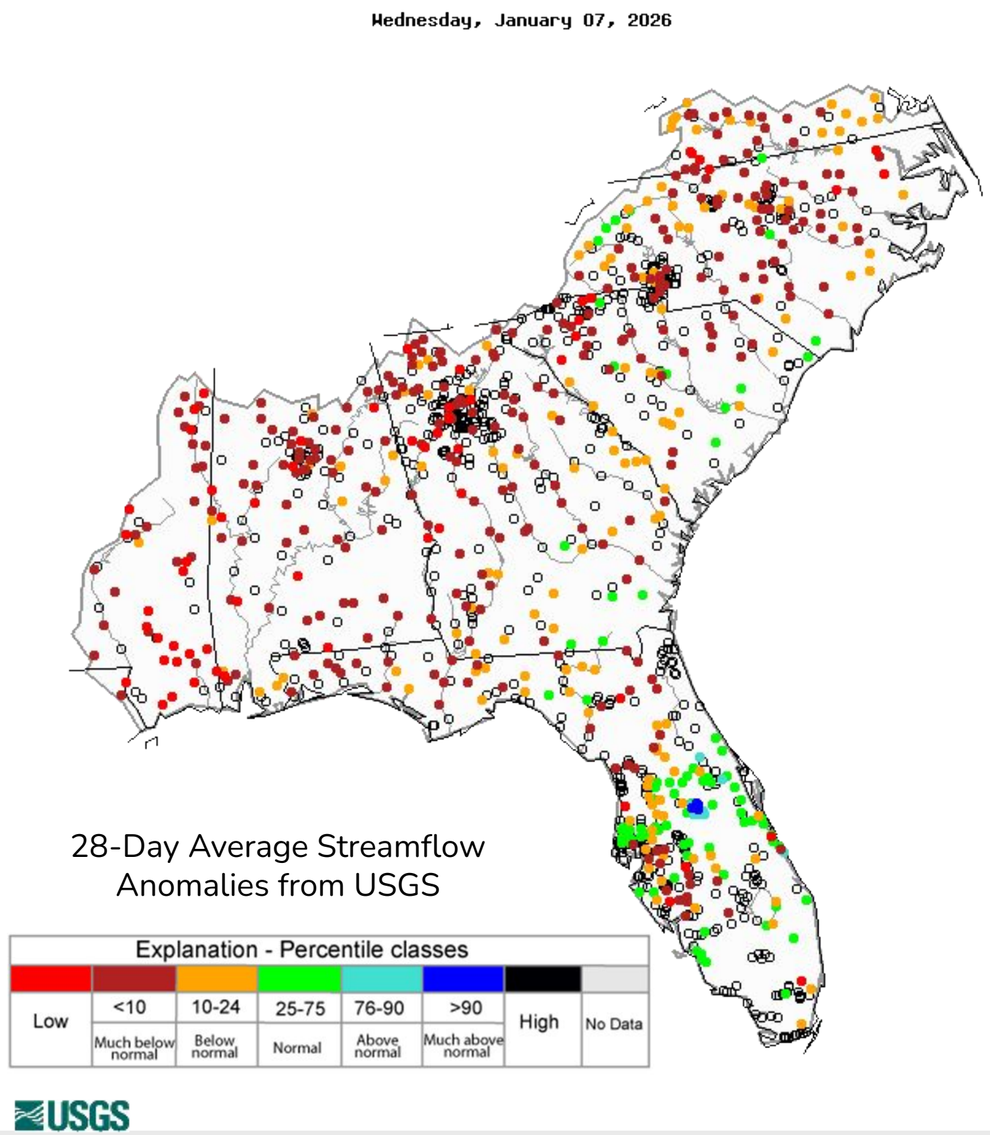
- Keetch-Byram Drought Index values range from 200-550 across the region, with the lowest values in the west.
- Even with the low KBDI levels, brush fires have started to increase again, though still below the peak of our drought.
- Despite the recent rains, continue to exercise caution with outdoor burning.

Mitigation Actions

- Please refer to your municipality for mitigation information

Hydrologic Conditions and Impacts

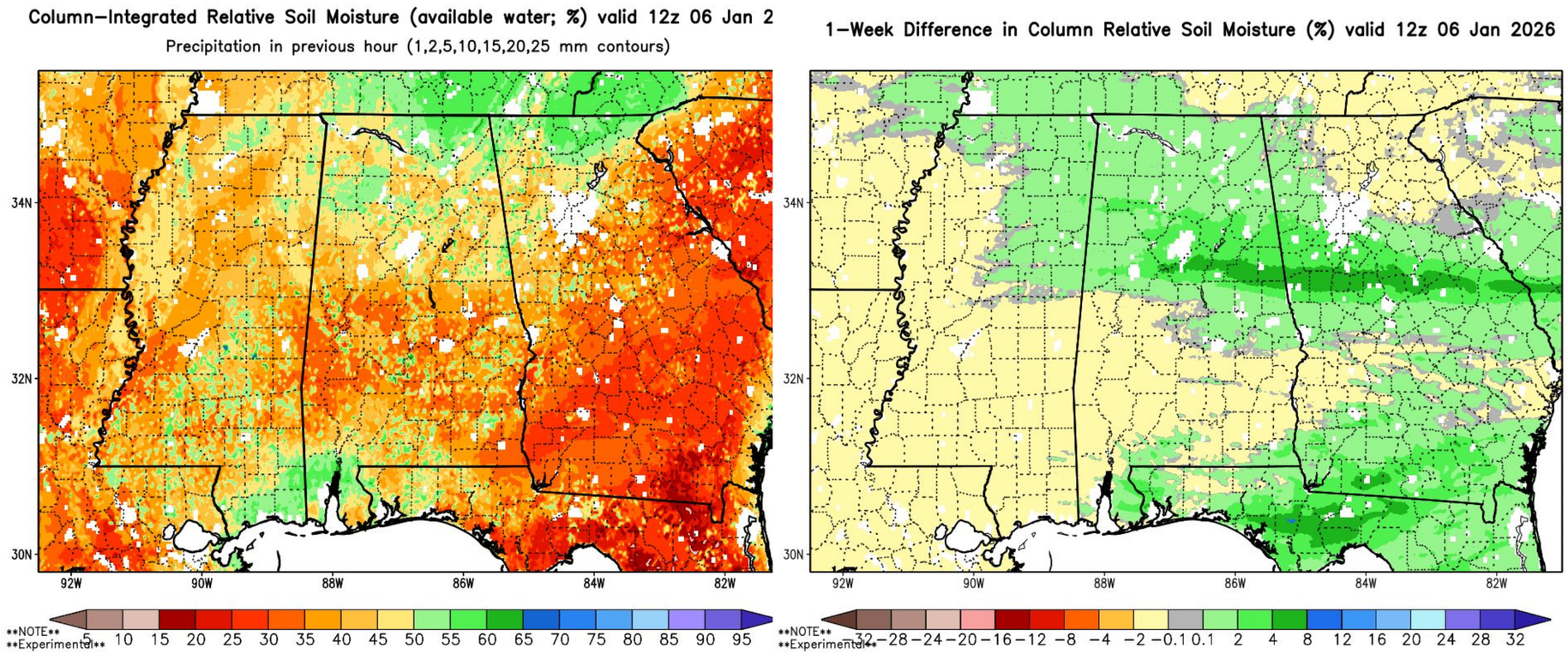
- Streamflow conditions are exceptionally low and well below normal for this time of year.
- The lack of significant rains over the last month moving into our winter rainy season is setting the stage for further drought degradation.
- Rainfall continues to help soil conditions and mitigate fire weather risk in the near term, but it is not sufficient to recharge water levels in rivers, streams, and lakes.
- While some rainfall could occur this weekend, the forecast suggests below normal rainfall over the next two to three weeks, which will likely worsen streamflow conditions.



28-Day Average Streamflow Anomalies from USGS

Agricultural Impacts

- Rainfall from last week did result in some improvement in soil moisture.
- However, deep layer soil moisture remains dry further to the east, especially in our harder hit drought areas in South Georgia and North Florida.



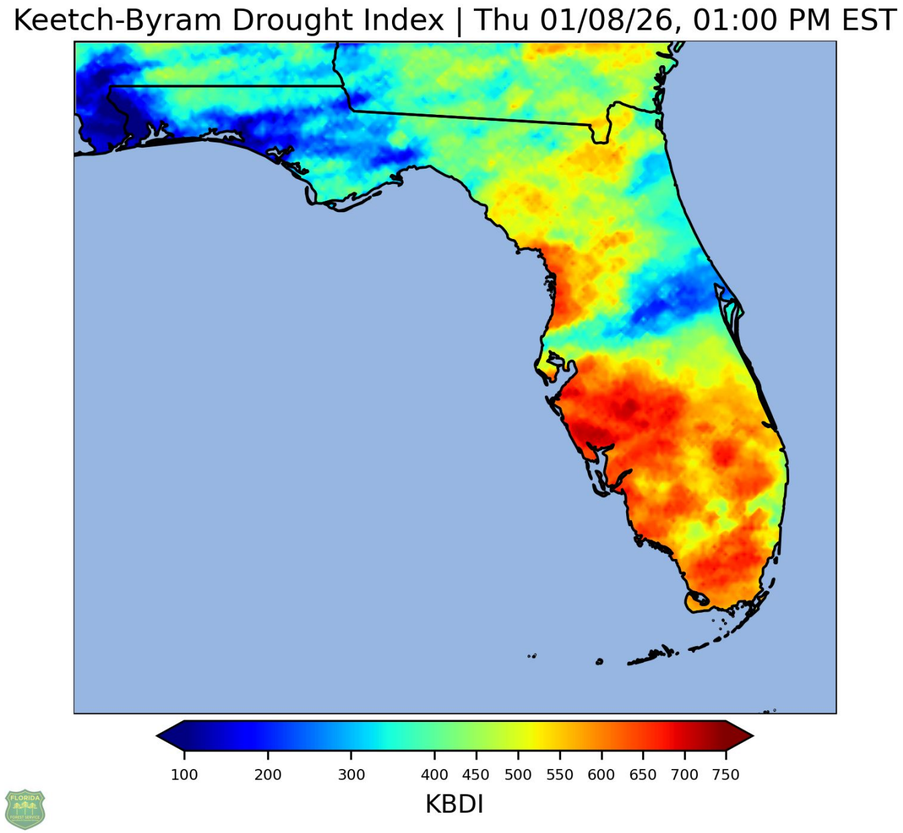
0-200 cm Relative Soil Moisture & 1-week Change in 0-200 cm Relative Soil Moisture
Data courtesy of NASA SPoRT

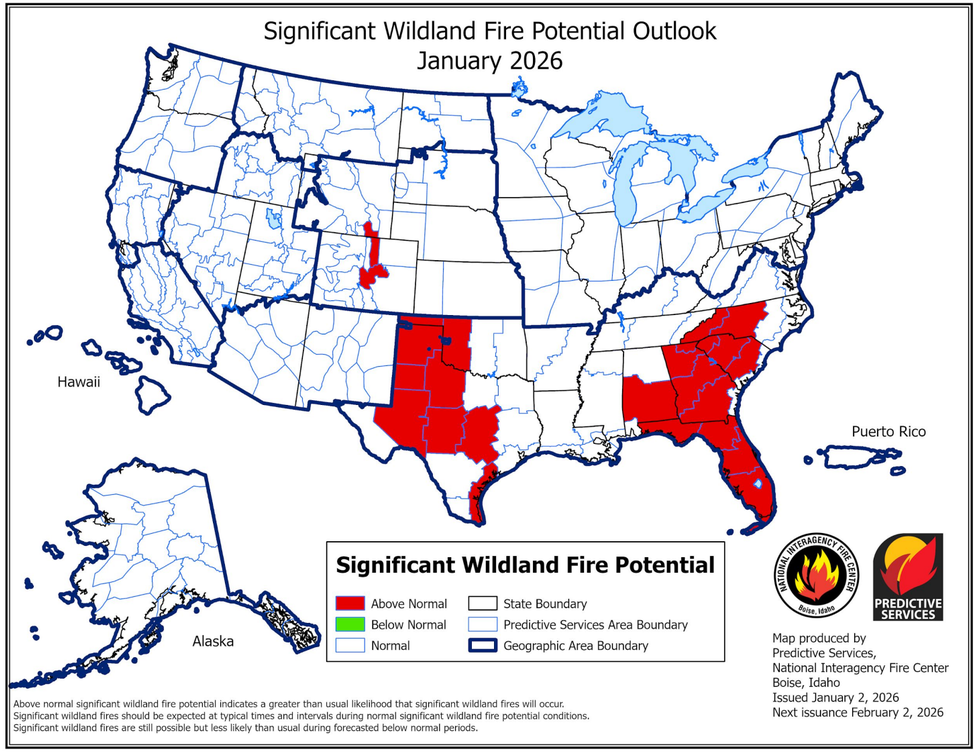
2025 Crop Reports
Alabama | Florida | Georgia

Fire Hazard Impacts

Link to [Wildfire Potential Outlooks from the National Interagency Coordination Center.]

- Keetch-Byram Drought Indices dropped in the Florida Panhandle with the recent rains, but are increasing in South Georgia and the Suwannee Basin.
- Brush fires have begun to increase across South Georgia and Southeast Alabama.
- The Significant Wildland Fire Potential Outlook for January calls for above normal wildfire activity across much of the area





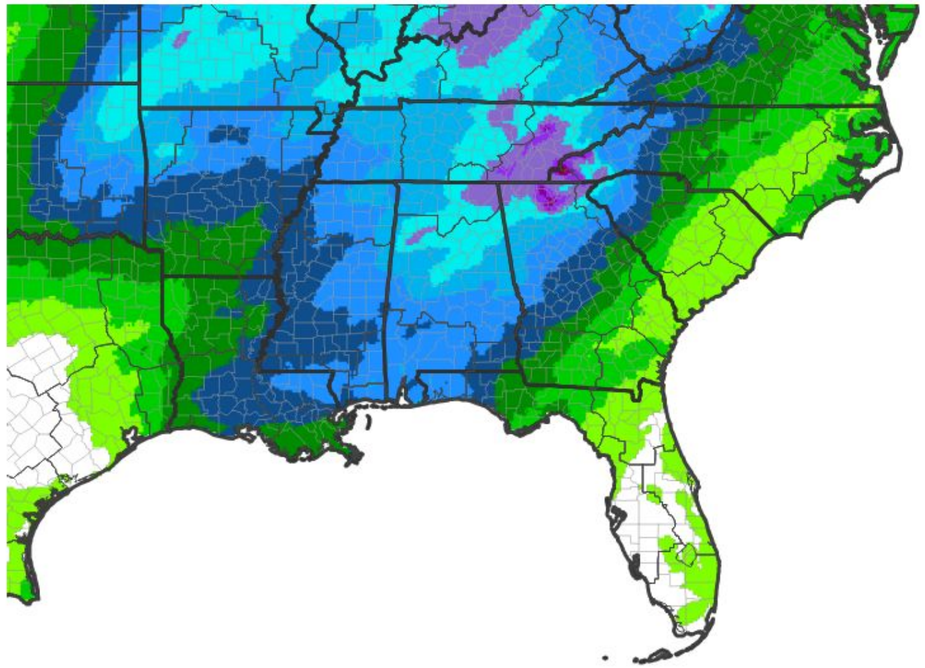
Precipitation Outlook

- A cold front will approach the region on Friday and move through the region on Saturday. Some locations in the western part of the region could receive up to 0.5 to 1 inch of rain, with much lower values to the east.

- Weekly normals are around 1-1.25 inches of rain.

8-14 day outlook (1/15 - 1/21): leaning above normal

7-Day Quantitative Precipitation Forecast for January 5, 2026–January 12, 2026



Predicted Inches of Precipitation

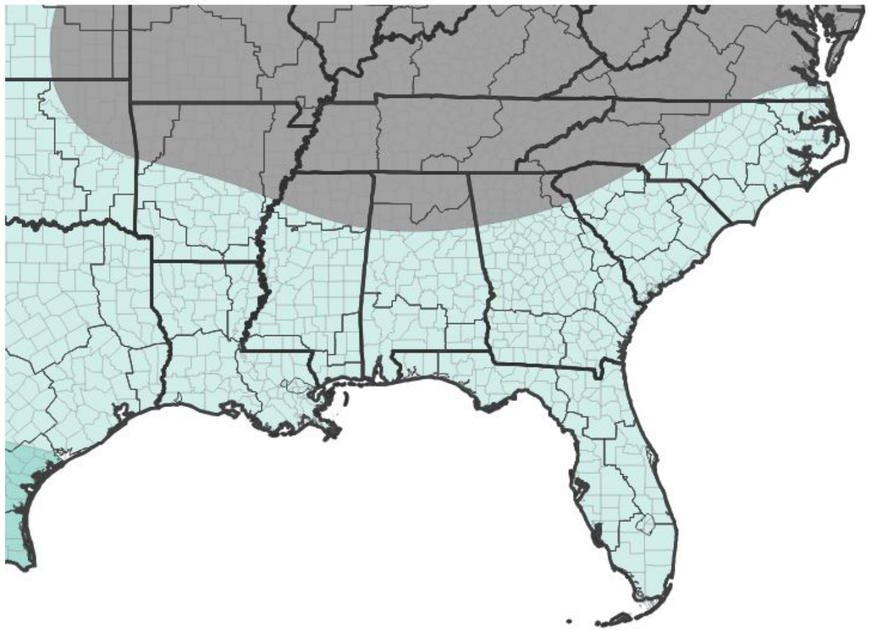
0 0.01 0.1 0.25 0.5 0.75 1 1.25 1.5 1.75

1.75 2 2.5 3 4 5 7 10 15 20

Source(s): National Weather Service Weather Prediction Center; image courtesy of Drought.gov

Last Updated: 01/05/26

8–14 Day Precipitation Outlook for January 15, 2026–January 21, 2026



Probability of Below-Normal Precipitation

33% 40% 50% 60% 70% 80% 90% 100%

Probability of Above-Normal Precipitation

33% 40% 50% 60% 70% 80% 90% 100%

Near-Normal Conditions

Source(s): Climate Prediction Center; image courtesy of Drought.gov

Last Updated: 01/07/26

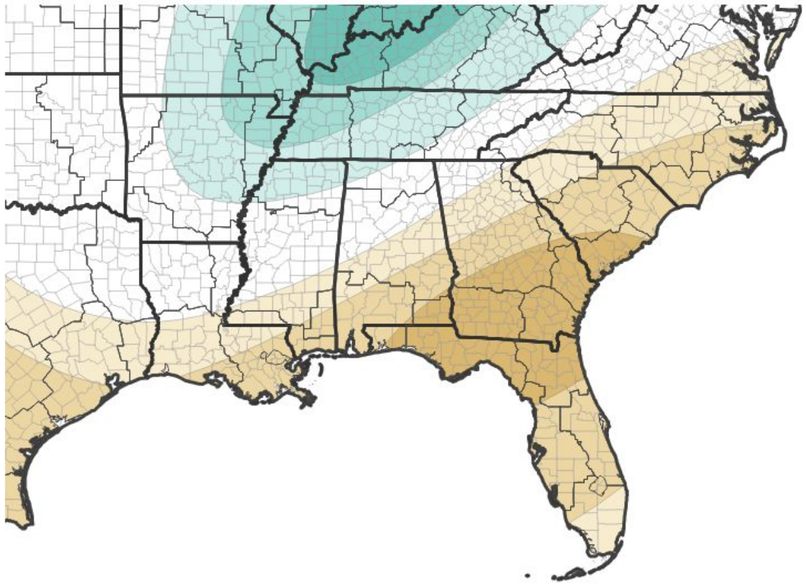
Long-Range Outlooks

The latest monthly and seasonal outlooks can be found on the CPC homepage

- The next 3 months are predicted to favor much above normal temperatures and much below normal precipitation.
- While this outlook is very consistent with the climatological presentation of a La Nina pattern, it doesn't mean that extreme cold events won't occur.

	January		February		March	
Average	Temp	Rain	Temp	Rain	Temp	Rain
Tallahassee	52.2°	4.41”	55.6°	4.25”	61.4°	5.24”
Apalachicola	54.0°	4.06”	56.8°	4.17”	61.7°	4.34”
Albany	50.5°	4.19”	54.0°	4.01”	60.3°	4.38”
Valdosta	50.7°	3.83”	54.6°	3.31”	60.1°	3.73”
Marianna	51.8°	4.04”	55.4°	4.49”	61.5°	5.01”
Dothan	50.8°	4.76”	54.6°	4.82”	60.8°	4.72”

Seasonal (3-Month) Precipitation Outlook for January 1, 2026–March 31, 2026



Probability of Below-Normal Precipitation

33% 40% 50% 60% 70% 80% 90% 100%

Probability of Above-Normal Precipitation

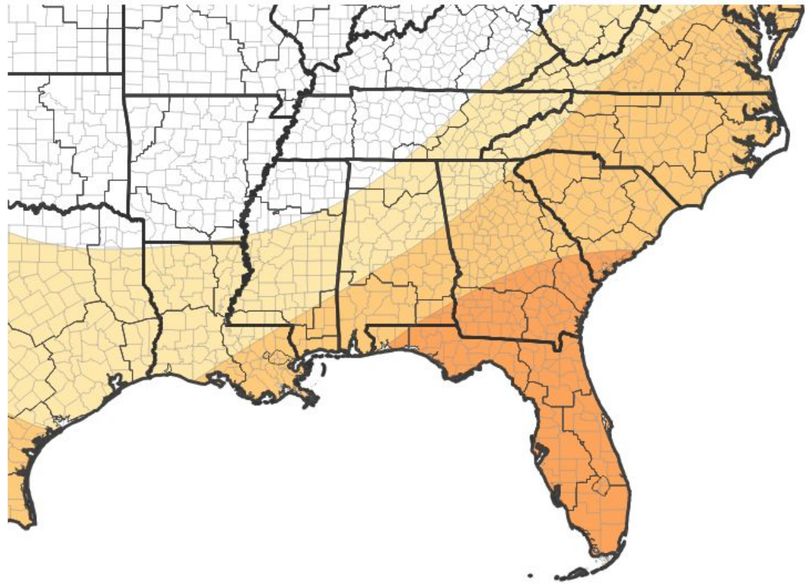
33% 40% 50% 60% 70% 80% 90% 100%

Probability of Near-Normal Precipitation

33% 40% 50%

Source(s): Climate Prediction Center; image courtesy of Drought.gov Last Updated: 12/18/25

Seasonal (3-Month) Temperature Outlook for January 1, 2026–March 31, 2026



Probability of Below-Normal Temperatures

33% 40% 50% 60% 70% 80% 90% 100%

Probability of Above-Normal Temperatures

33% 40% 50% 60% 70% 80% 90% 100%

Probability of Near-Normal Temperatures

33% 40% 50%

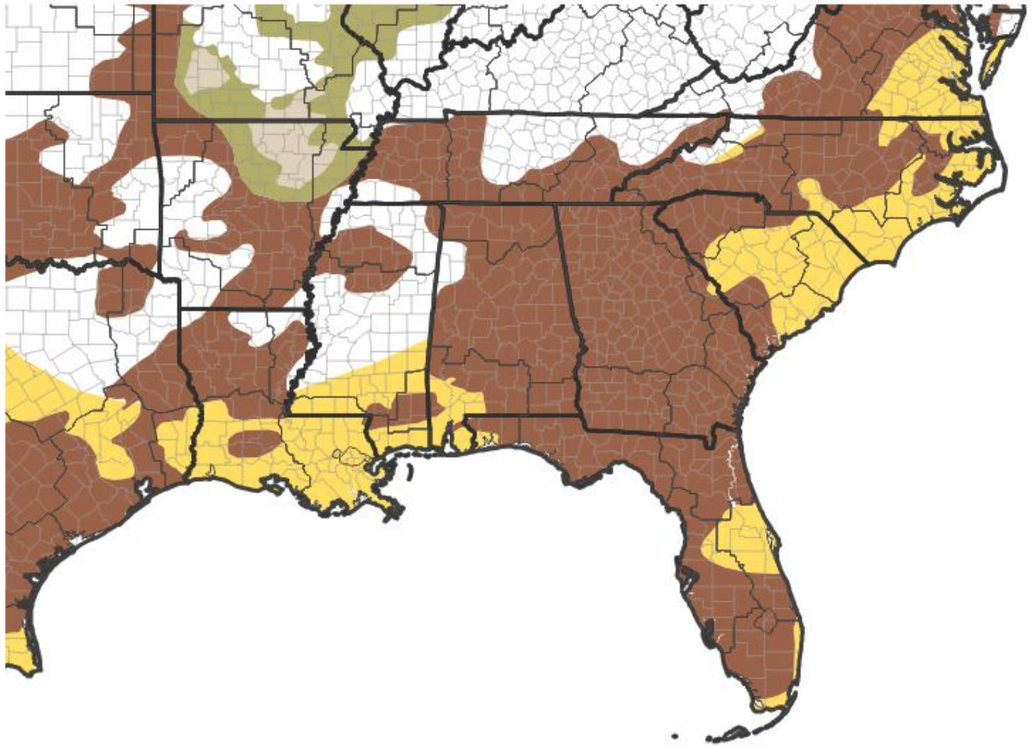
Source(s): Climate Prediction Center; image courtesy of Drought.gov Last Updated: 12/18/25

Drought Outlook

The latest monthly and seasonal outlooks can be found on the CPC homepage

- Given the prediction for much below normal precipitation in the months ahead, drought is expected to persist across the region over the next three months.
- Should rainfall over the next three months be much below normal, drought conditions could even worsen with time, especially heading into late winter and spring when planting begins and water demand increases.

Seasonal (3-Month) Drought Outlook for December 31, 2025–March 31, 2026



Drought Is Predicted To...

Persist | Improve | End | Develop | No Drought

Source(s): Climate Prediction Center; image courtesy of Drought.gov

Last Updated: 12/31/25

Links to the latest:
Climate Prediction Center Monthly Drought Outlook
Climate Prediction Center Seasonal Drought Outlook